A

SERMON

Preached before the

Artillery-Company

OF

LONDON,

AT

St Mary-le-Bow,

DECEMBER 2, 1684.

And now Publiſhed at their deſire.

By BENJAMIN CALAMY, *D. D.*
One of his Majeſties Chaplains in Ordinary.

LONDON,
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SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

Artillery-Company

OF

LONDON,

AT

St Mary-le-Bow,

DECEMBER 5, 1681.

And now Published at their desire

To the Right Honourable

Sir *William Prichard* Knight and Alderman,

President of the *Artillery-Company.*

To the Right Honourable

Sir *James Smith,* LORD MAYOR,

VICE-PRESIDENT.

To the Right Worshipful

Sir *Matthew Andrews* TREASURER.

As also to the Right Honourable

Earl of *Aran,* | Earl of *Salisbury,*
Earl of *Huntingdon,* | Lord *Cholmondeley.*

To the Right Worshipful

Sir *Richard Temple,* | Sir *Samuel Dashwood,*
Sir *Peter Daniel,* | Captain *William Davies,*

STEWARDS.

And to the whole Court of Assistants, Field-Officers, Captains, and Gentlemen, Professing and Exercising Arms in that Renowned and Honourable Society.

Right Honourable, &c.

SO *many excellent Books have been of late Written in defence of Loyalty and the Government, in answer to those virulent and Seditious Pamphlets and Libels that have been Published amongst us, that we might reasonably hope there should be hardly now left one disaffected Man in*

in the Nation: Yet it appears by those discontents that are still whisper'd, that there is great need of an anniversary meeting of this Illustrious Society, which not only by their Example doth encourage others to be Loyal, but can also force those to be such, who perhaps might have but little mind to it otherwise. And notwithstanding all that hath been said or Printed for obedience to Lawful Authority, there are many so slenderly converted, and so ready on all occasions to Relapse, that there cannot but be frequent use of some plain Discourses, to shew the wickedness, as well as mischievousness of all disloyal Principles. To do this in some measure, is the honest design of the following Sermon, which is now humbly presented to your favourable acceptance, By

Right Honourable, &c.

Your most humble and most

obedient Servant,

Benjamin Calamy.

A SERMON

Preached before the

Artillery-Company.

St. MATTHEW XXVI. 52.

Then ſaid Jeſus unto him, put up again thy Sword into his place: for all they that take the Sword ſhall periſh with the Sword.

I Can eaſily imagine ſome amongſt you upon the firſt hearing of theſe words ready to tell me, that this advice of our Lords is by no means ſuited or proper to this illuſtrious Aſſembly, conſiſting of Men ſo long Trained up, and ſo excellently skill'd in Martial exerciſes. To bid thoſe, who ſo well know the uſe of the Sword, to *put it into its place*, and ſuffer it to ruſt in its Scabbard, ſounds like a diſmiſſion or disbanding of this renowned and honourable Society, and an hard cenſure of your noble Profeſſion, as unlawful or Antichriſtian, and infinitely dangerous too, if *all they that take the Sword ſhall periſh by the Sword.*

But if we better consider what our Saviour here saith, we shall not find any thing in this Text against the use of the Sword upon a just and necessary occasion, or when it is duely put into our hands by those, who have from God the power of the Sword committed to them. For he did not command his Disciples to fling it away, as of no further use under the Gospel; as if no other Sword was now necessary but that of the Spirit; or as if all Christians were bound tamely to yield up themselves an easy prey to violent and injurious Men, and in no case to repel unjust force by force. No: our blessed Lord but a little before, *viz.* the very same Night in which he spake the words of my Text, had advised his Disciples, those of them who had no Swords, *to sell their Garments and buy one*; thereby allowing them to provide Arms sufficient for their defence against lawless Robbers and Cut-throats, who were very common and numerous in those Countries, through which they were to pass for the propagation of Christianity.

Our Saviour did never intend to ty all his Disciples hands, and expose them naked to be Invaded and Assaulted by any one that had a mind to it. To oppose force against unjust force is allow'd to every Man by the Law of Nature, which natural right our Religion hath not cancel'd nor restrained, provided always that we thus draw our Swords only against private Persons, and not against those who have

have Warrant or Command of publick Authority to vouch their force againſt us; and that it be in ſuch caſes of extremity, where we cannot defend our ſelves by the regular courſe of calling in the Aſſiſtance of the Law or Magiſtrate.

Nay further, in the very words of my Text our Saviour doth expreſly allow the uſe of the Sword in the hands of the Supreme power, or by Comiſſion and Authority from it. For when he ſaith *they ſhall periſh by the Sword*, he means by the Sword of the Magiſtrate, which ſhall juſtly cut off ſuch Offenders.

Thus from the words themſelves we have ſufficient evidence, that our Saviour did not forbid the uſe of the Sword; either in our own neceſſary defence, or at the Command and direction of the Supreme Governours: In which two caſes only it was ever lawful for private Perſons. And in this matter the Laws of our Religion have made no alteration. We may ſtill defend our ſelves by the Sword from the unjuſt Aſſaults of private Perſons, when we have no other Remedy; and the Soveraigns of every Nation and Kingdom have the ſame power over their Subjects perſons, fortunes and lives, that they had before Chriſtianity appeared in the World, that they had from the beginning, ſince Men firſt entered into Societies, and lived under Government.

Our Saviour therefore in my Text forbids the uſe

of the Sword only on that particular occaſion, or the like, on which it was drawn by St. *Peter*, which was this;

A great company of Souldiers, and other Officers from the chief Prieſts and Phariſees, with the Traitour *Judas* to conduct them, were ſent to Apprehend our Bleſſed Saviour in the Garden, whither he had retired. This the Diſciples thought a fit opportunity to ſhew their courage and conſtancy to their Lord and Maſter, by venturing their own Lives to reſcue him from the mercyleſs hands of his bloody enemies. They asked him therefore, *Lord ſhall we ſmite with the Sword?* and St. *Peter*, who was naturally of a more hot temper and bolder ſpirit than the reſt of the Apoſtles, without tarrying for an Anſwer drew his Sword, and ſtruck at the chiefeſt and moſt buſy of them, (ſome gueſs him to be the Man that Commanded the Party, and had the Warrant to ſeize our Lord) and he cut off his ear. But our Saviour liked not this raſh and ungovernable zeal, and therefore intreated thoſe who had him in their power to ſuffer him but ſo long, till by a Miraculous touch he healed the Wound, and turning to St. *Peter*, bad him *put up his Sword again into his place*. For at preſent there was not the leaſt juſt occaſion for it, (as great an one as he might think was now offered to him) that his Cauſe ſtood not in need of any ſuch irregular defence. It was not for lack of help, that he thus quietly ſubmitted himſelf

ſelf, but out of reſpect to that Authority, which imploy'd theſe Souldiers and Officers. Had he any deſire to be forceably delivered out of their hands, did he want any to fight for him, he could eaſily ſpeak to his Father, and he would preſently ſend more than Twelve Legions of Angels to appear for his reſcue. *For he that taketh the Sword*, that is at his own pleaſure or for his own humour without ſufficient order or Authority, when it is not put into his hands, but he *taketh* it without warrantable direction, or uſeth it againſt a Lawful Authority, *ſhall periſh by the Sword*, ſhall and ought to ſuffer for ſo doing, is guilty of a capital crime, for which he forfeits his Life to Juſtice here, and of a moſt grievous ſin, for which without Repentance he ſhall ſtand condemned hereafter. *Put up again thy Sword into his place, for all they that take the Sword ſhall periſh with the Sword*

Our Saviour here plainly condemns all reſiſtance of Lawful Authority by force and violence, ſince he would not ſuffer the Sword to be drawn againſt thoſe, who acted by a juſt Authority, though what they did was barbarouſly unjuſt. Whether it be in any caſe lawful by force and violence to reſiſt Authority, is truly ſtiled *the greateſt caſe of Conſcience in the world*, ſince ſo very much doth depend upon the right reſolution of it. And if it could be plainly made out that our Saviour, or his Apoſtles, did give Subjects right or liberty on any pretence to take

up

up Arms, or to fight againgſt the Lawful powers, I ſhould look upon it as the greateſt objection that could be brought againſt Chriſtianity. For it would be an eternal ſcandal, and indelible reproach againſt our Religion, if it countenanced any thing, that was ſo manifeſtly inconſiſtent with the peace of Societies and civil Government.

There is nothing more evident than that this principle, that it is Lawful in ſome caſes for Subjects by force to reſiſt their King and Sovereign, doth open a wide door to all manner of diſorder and confuſion. For if it ever be Lawful for Subjects to reſiſt the Soveraign power, then it follows that the Subjects have always a right to judge, whether their preſent caſe be ſuch, as that they may Lawfully reſiſt in, and if they be Judges, this Propoſition that ſubjects may reſiſt in ſome caſes, of which themſelves are Judges, is the ſame, as to ſay, that they may do it whenever they ſhall think fit for to do it; and thus any ſuſpicion or diſcontent taken up againſt the Government, any grievance we can fancy, any thing our Governour doth that is miſconſtrued or miſinterpreted, will be thought a juſtifiable pretence for taking up Arms againſt him, which neceſſarily lays the Foundation of everlaſting Wars and troubles.

I might therefore ſufficiently evince the falſeneſs of this Principle from the inevitable miſchievous conſequences of it; but it rather becomes the place I now ſtand in to ſhew how wicked and unchriſtian

a Doctrine it is. And there is nothing more plainly and ſolemnly condemned by the Laws of our Religion, than for Subjects by force of Arms on any occaſion to reſiſt the Supreme Power and Authority, let it be in one ſingle perſon, or more, according to the different forms of Government in ſeveral Countries: Or to ſpeak as the caſe is amongſt our ſelves, it is never Lawful by our Religion on any pretence to reſiſt the King, or any Authoriſed by the King, whom we all acknowledge in the Oath of *Supremacy* to be *the only Supreme Governour of this Realm*, and if he be the only *Supreme*, there is no power on Earth equal or co-ordinate to his any more, than there is any Superiour.

Had we no other proof of this, as we have abundance, but theſe words of our Saviour to St. *Peter*, we might from them ſufficiently learn his Mind and Will concerning reſiſtance of the Supreme Power. Where I ſhall obſerve firſt, what a fair pretence and Plea St. *Peter* and the Diſciples had for drawing the Sword or taking up Arms, and then I ſhall explain the grounds or reaſons upon which our Saviour forbad them, and ſo ſharply rebuked St. *Peter*; laſtly I ſhall draw one or two inferences from the whole.

1. Conſider what plauſible pretence St. *Peter* and the Diſciples here had for the drawing of the Sword; and ſurely if ever there was or can be any caſe, wherein reſiſtance of Lawful Authority by force is juſtifiable, it muſt had been ſo in this we are now diſcourſing of. For 1. This

1. This act of St. *Peter* was purely defensive. Here was no Plot or design laid against the *Chief Priests* or *Elders* of the *Jews*, much less against the Life or Dignity of *Cæsar*, or the Authority of his Deputy in *Judæa*. No Combination nor *Association* for the defence of our Saviour, no holy League or Covenant taken, nor engagement entred into to root out the Highpriesthood and Jewish Hierarchy, and to stand by one another with their Lives and Fortunes; no naming of a General, or listing of Souldiers in the Cause; no contribution of Plate or Money for the carrying it on; no contrivance of any Insurrection or seizing the Guards, or stirring up the people against the Government; no secret consults about the management of the business; but only an hasty and rash attempt to secure our Saviours Person from the violence offered to him; which if they had by force effected, and actually delivered him out of the hands of the Officers that came to apprehend him, there in all probability the Tumult would have stopped, and no further damage or prejudice happened to the publick State. So that here was not any dangerous Conspiracy against the Government, nor a direct taking up Arms against it, but their greatest fault seems to be only a disorderly zeal for the Life and safety of their Lord and Master, to preserve which they thought themselves in gratitude and honour bound.

2. The violence here offered to our Saviour by the

Chief Prieſts and Officers was as baſe and vile piece of injuſtice, as ever was acted by Men: Moſt foul treachery in *Judas*, invincible malice in the *Chief Prieſts* and *Elders* againſt the moſt innocent perſon that ever lived in the World. I may well call their ſpite againſt him invincible, ſince thoſe marvellous good works he had done amongſt them, all the kindneſſes they had received from him, the incomparable ſweetneſs and obligingneſs of his temper and deportment could not ſubdue it.

Now this St. *Peter* and the reſt of our Saviours intimate friends and followers could not be ignorant of. They knew how the Rulers of the *Jews* had all along laid their traps to enſnare him, invented their *Sham-plots* to find matter of accuſation againſt him, with what unwearied diligence they had Perſecuted him, and all that adhered to him, and were now at laſt reſolved on his Death. And who could be ſafe in their Lives and Eſtates, if ſuch exemplary vertue and innocence could not protect our Bleſſed Saviour? So that here their civil Liberties and Properties were highly concerned. If our Governours prevail, and by ſuch manifeſt injuſtice take away this Mans Life, the Lord knows who of us by ſuch wicked Arts and ſubornation of witneſſes and methods of violence ſhall go next. This is ſuch an inſtance of Arbitrarineſs and Tyranny, as is not to be endured by a free people.

3. It is further to be conſidered that not only

their civil Liberties and Birthright, but the true Religion was also in great danger. This person in whose defence St. *Peter* drew his Sword was no other than the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, that great Prophet of whom *Moses* spake of old time, and whom their whole Nation had so long expected: That Divine Preacher of Righteousness, whom God had sent into the World these last days to instruct mankind, and discover his whole will to us, and by it to conduct us to eternal Life. Now this seizing of his Person was a downright rejecting the true *Messiah*, a design to root out his holy Doctrine, which his enemies doubted not but would dy with him. Who would not stretch a little and venture something in so Sacred and so Glorious a Cause? Did it become the Disciples to stand upon little niceties and punctilio's of duty, when they were haling away the Son of God himself, as the vilest Malefactor, and all that was dear to them lay at stake? or needed they to fear Gods displeasure, for rescuing one so dear to him out of the hands of those wretched Miscreants, who would treat him with all imaginable spite and cruelty? Thus you see it was their Love only and concern for the best person, the best Religion, that inspirited St. *Peter* and the Disciples with courage and resolution to attack the Souldiers and Officers that came against their Master.

4. The force that was opposed, or the resistance that was made was only against the inferiour and meanest

meaneſt Officers and Servants. The Sword was drawn neither againſt *Cæſar* himſelf, nor any ſent by him as *Herod* or *Pilate*, nor yet againſt any of the *Chief Prieſts* and *Elders* of the *Jews* themſelves, but only againſt ſome of their ordinary *Malignant* Servants and Officers; and that too at a time when but very little power remained to the *Jews*, who could not judge in *Capital* Cauſes, nor put any to Death by their own Authority. St. *Peter* might have pleaded, that he deſign'd no hurt or miſchief to the perſons of his Governours, whom he acknowledged to be Sacred and Inviolable; that he owned the Authority of the *Chief Prieſts* and *Elders*, did not fight againſt them, but for them againſt their unjuſt *Miniſters*, who came treacherouſly in the Night to ſurprize our Saviour, that they might deliver him up to *Pilate* the *Roman* Preſident; and this without any Commiſſion from him, who had the chief Juridiction in *Jewry*.

In ſhort, St. *Peter* only reſiſted unjuſt and illegal Violence: He thought himſelf under the ſtrongeſt Obligations of Love and Gratitude to his Lord and Maſter to do it. It was zeal for *Chriſt* inflamed him, he could not endure to ſee the Son of God ſo baſely uſed. Yet notwithanding all theſe Circumſtances, which I have alledged in his favour, he was ſeverely reprehended by our Saviour for drawing his Sword, the fact was condemned, and thoſe who ſhould hereafter imitate him by taking the Sword in like caſes Sentenced as worthy of Death.

2. I proceed to enquire into the grounds and reaſons, upon which our Saviour blamed and condemned this Fact of St. *Peter*, and we ſhall find theſe two.

1. Becauſe he had no competent Authority to draw his Sword.

2. Becauſe fighting in defence of our Saviour and his Religion was utterly inconſiſtent with his deſign, and the Nature of his Kingdom.

1. Becauſe he had no competent Authority to juſtifie his drawing his Sword. So ſaith our Saviour, *All they that take the Sword*, of their own heads, who without leave or Commiſſion uſurp the right of the Magiſtrate, ſhall ſuffer the puniſhment due by Law to *Murderers, who ſo ſheddeth Mans Blood, by Man ſhall his Blood be ſhed.*

God Almighty is the ſole Lord and Maſter of Life and Death. No Man hath of himſelf power over his own Life, much leſs over anothers, and conſequently cannot transfer any ſuch power. What is therefore called *jus gladii* or the power of the Sword muſt be put into the hands of the Soveraign by God alone, whoſe Miniſter he is, and not by the people, who cannot give what they never had. Who therefore Fights with the allowance, or at the Command of the Supreme power, fights by Gods Authority too; by whoſe leave and appointment he takes away the Lives of the Kings enemies. And to pretend to fight for God without any Authority from the King,

muſt

muſt either ſuppoſe a private direction, and Commiſſion from God, (which is all impoſture) or it makes every private perſon a Soveraign, which is indeed to deſtroy the Nature both of Soveraign and Subject.

Our Bleſſed Saviour here pronounceth him worthy of Death, who ſhould draw his Sword either againſt or without a Lawful Authority, though it be to ſecure the greateſt innocence from the moſt unjuſt and illegal Perſecution: And can we then poſſibly deſire a plainer, or more expreſs Text of Scripture againſt all reſiſtance of Lawful Authority by force and violence, than theſe words of our Lord. For if (excepting the caſe of private defence, in which the conſent of the Supreme Power is ſuppoſed) we are never to uſe the Sword, but when we receive Authority to do it from the Publick Magiſtrate, then to be ſure it is never Lawful to uſe it againſt him; unleſs we will imagine the King to Authorize Men, and give them Commiſſion to fight againſt himſelf, as thoſe in our late Rebellion did, who pretended to fight againſt his Perſon by his Authority, a conceit as abſurd, as Traiterous.

Now by this one precept of non-Reſiſtance to the higher Powers our Saviour hath beſt ſecured the Rights of Princes, the liberty of the Subject and the Peace of Societies.

1. By this our Saviour hath ſecured the Rights of Soveraign Princes. This being an eſſential part of the

the Soveraign power to be unaccountable and irreſiſtable. For that power which is to give account unto, or may be reſiſted by any other power on Earth, is not the Soveraign power of a Nation, but it is ſubject to thoſe who cannot controul it. Thus if it were Lawful for the Body of the people in general or their repreſentatives in any caſe to take up Arms, and reſiſt, then is the King Soveraign only during pleaſure, and the people ſubject no longer, than they ſhall think fit: And it is truly ſaid, that *He hath only an empty ſhadow of Power and Authority*, who is cloathed with the *Robes of Majeſty*, and is entruſted with the *Scepter*, whilſt the power of the Sword is in another hand. If by our Religion it had been on any pretence permitted to have reſiſted, our Saviour had utterly deſtroyed all the rights of Government, Kings would have had a very uncertain precarious Title to their Crowns, he had made their Subjects Judges of their Soveraigns actions, and conſequently ſuperiour to them; in a word, he had dethroned all Monarchs by transferring that abſolute uncontrollable Power, which in all Governments muſt be lodged ſomewhere, from the King to the people.

2. By forbidding reſiſtance our Saviour hath moſt effectually ſecured the Rights, Liberties and Properties of the ſubject, which certainly are beſt preſerved under Government. For the greateſt danger ſubjects are in is not from their Prince, but from their fellow ſubjects; and for this purpoſe God hath inſtituted

inſtituted Government to ſecure us from the violence of other injurious perſons, without which we ſhould live as amongſt *Bears* and *Tygers*, nay *without it neither Houſe, nor City, nor Nation, nor Mankind, nor Nature, nor the World it ſelf can ſubſiſt*, as *Tully* ſpeaks in his Third Book of *Laws*. When the Hedge and Wall is once broken down, and the fence taken away, we ſtrait become liable to the incurſions of all the Ravenous Beaſts of prey, and to avoid Tyranny or oppreſſion of our Governours, we ſoon are made ſlaves to the meaneſt of the people, as it uſually happens in Civil Wars, and proſperous Rebellions. This Doctrine therefore is ſo far from enſlaving the people, or deſtroying their Natural right of ſelf-preſervation, that it indeed teacheth us the beſt way to defend our ſelves, and ſecure our Liberties.

Publick Government is always the beſt means of ſelf-defence; and therefore to reſiſt, or to endeavour to overthrow the Government at any time, is to take away and deſtroy the beſt means we have of defending our own Lives, Properties, and Rights. It may indeed, as the caſe may ſome times happen, free us from one Tyrant, but then it oppoſes us to the rage and luſt of Ten Thouſand. Our Rights and Liberties are not any ways more certainly violated, than by civil commotions and inteſtine Tumults, and broils: and oppreſſion, under the worſt Government is not ſo great an evil, as the devaſtations and deſolations that are made by ſubjects reſiſting

filting, and rebelling againſt their Soveraign. On which account it is reported of the old *Perſians*, that upon the Death of any of their Kings the people were allowed ſome few days freedom from all Government, that *by the miſchiefs, ſlaughters, outrages and rapines, committed in that ſhort interval, they might be convinced of the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of Government*, and that the worſt was vaſtly better than none at all.

Laſtly, By this precept of non-reſiſtance our Saviour hath provided for the peace of Societies, which can never be maintained, where this principle is once admitted, that it is lawful in ſome caſes to reſiſt the Supreme Authority. For the beſt Governours, the moſt equal and juſt Governments are diſpleaſing to ſome or other. It is impoſſible that things ſhould be always adminiſtred with that exact fairneſs, and proportion, and ſucceſs too, as not to offend ſome, who ſhall think themſelves oppreſs'd and wrong'd; and if they think ſo, this ſhall be ground enough to diſturb the peace of the Kingdom.

Hence there muſt be eternal jealouſies between the Prince and people; watching for all advantages one againſt the other; continual undermining and weakning one anothers intereſt and force; and nothing could be the reſult of ſuch a conſtitution, but endleſs tumult and confuſion. So that it is a defeating the very end of all ſocieties; and liberty of defence, if allowed to private perſons againſt their ſuperiours, would make the condition of ſubjects

jects far worse, than it can well be under the most absolute and illimited Monarchy.

I know here very Tragical Stories are told, and strange consequences drawn from this Doctrine; that this *makes us all slaves to the will and lust of any vile wretch, that happens to be in the Throne, such as were* Tyberius, Nero, *and the like, that one Arm unresisted may Butcher and Massacre a whole City or Nation, that this is enough to turn a Kingdom into a Shambles, that it is not to be thought that God would ever trust one Man with such unbounded power of doing mischief, that to submit and sit still under such oppression and Tyranny, as may arise from the abuse of unbridled power, is to throw away our Lives, as Men weary of them, and that it is Mahumetan Doctrine, not Christian.*

But after all this it is no less than Demonstration, that the case of the subject is far easier and safer, whilst they are denied the Liberty of resisting, than it would have been had the same been indulged to them, the inconveniences on both sides being truly stated and weighed: as hath been evidently made out by several late Writers on behalf of the Government beyond all fair contradiction; and for the proof of it all appeal to the late Rebellion, called a Defensive War, and justified by this Doctrine of the Lawfulness of resisting for the Preservation of our Rights and Liberties and Religion, yet *there was more Christian Blood shed, more Lives lost in that quarrel, more Estates plundred and Confiscated, more Families ruin'd and undone, than by all the Persecutions and Tyrannies of all the Kings and Queens of England since the Conquest.* So that it

is for the good and interest of every subject, that would live quietly and peaceably and safely, that the Soveraign power should be invested with an absolute unaccountable, irresistible Authority, Subordinate to none but God himself.

And though honest Men may be in some danger from such power, when it happens to be in ill hands, yet they would be continually in far greater danger, if it might be resisted.

Was it thus Lawful on any account to take Arms, there would never be wanting a pretence for it, and so the Government, like a Football, would be continually tossed from one to another, till the strongest ran away with it, and he should prevail no longer, than till another stronger than he came and trip'd up his heels, and what security can there be for the Lives, Estates, and Liberties of the subjects in the midst of such continual disorders and revolutions? This therefore is no hard Law of our Saviours, that we should not take up Arms in our own defence against the Magistrate, but very beneficial and profitable to Mankind, since the mischief of such resistance is manifestly greater and more fatal, than all the supposed inconveniences that can arise from the abuse of power. Some few Men may fall a Sacrifice to the fury or malice of a wicked Tyrant, but Thousands and Ten Thousands perish, when Men attempt to save their Lives by Rebellion.

Our Saviour and his Apostles could not but consider this, when they so earnestly forbad all resistance to Authority;

thority; that such unaccountable power may soon degenerate into Tyranny. They could not forget what grievous Tyrants then Reign'd in the World, most infamous for their Cruelty, Injustice and Oppression; and yet these must not be resisted by Christians.

Nay if we consider the reason of the case, it will appear as necessary, that we should be forbidden to resist those who Rule Arbitrarily and unjustly, as well as the best and most gracious Princes. Since it is so easy a matter to cheat the common people into a bad opinion of their Governours, who are always apt to suspect the worst of those above them. And if it had been Lawful to have resisted Arbitrary Power, every King good or bad would have been at the mercy of the people. For what Prince can ever hope by the most equal Government, and most mild administration to avoid the infamy of Tyranny and Arbitrary power, when our present most Gracious Soveraign, and his Father of ever blessed Memory could not do it. This is the first reason why our Saviour on this occasion forbad St. *Peter* the use of the Sword, not only because the time was now come wherein the *Messiah* was to suffer and dy, but because St. *Peter* had no Authority for the drawing of it, and it was against the Lawful powers. *All they that take the Sword, shall perish with the Sword.*

2. There was another reason for which our Saviour condemned St. *Peters* using his Sword upon this occasion, because fighting in defence of himself and his Religion was meerly inconsistent with his design, and the

Nature of his Kingdom. Thus himself tells *Pilate* St. *John* 18. 36. *My Kingdom is not of this World. If my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my Kingdom not from hence.* The Apostles were much mistaken, when they thought to shew their zeal for their Master by setting upon and destroying of his enemies. They had another warfare to be engaged in. They were to glorify our Saviour by suffering all manner of evils chearfully, and courageously for his sake, and this our Saviour taught them by this rebuke of St. *Peter*.

He himself came into the World a pattern of meekness and lowliness, of the greatest humility and most unwearied patience, and these were the Vertues that were to crown his Disciples, and to recommend his Religion to Mankind. He did not intend to send out his Apostles as so many *Captains* and *Generals* by force to subdue the World to his obedience, but he sent them out as Sheep amongst Wolves, exposed to all manner of evil treatment, which they were bravely and generously to endure for the sake of their Master, and his Religion was to thrive, and flourish by being Persecuted, to get ground by being opposed, and to be propagated by the passive valour and courage of Christians. Force of Arms and the Sword were no likely means to beget in Men that Dovelike, Childlike, innocent and quiet, meek and gentle Spirit, which his Doctrine was designed to implant in all that were called after his Name.

Thus the posture of St. *Peter* confessing the name

of

of Christ, with his Arms and Legs stretched out upon the Cross at *Rome*, was much more becoming an Apostle of the Crucificed *Jesus*, than brandishing his Sword in his hand, and fighting in defence of his Master. And this way did the Primitive Christians and Martyrs shew their Love and constancy to their Saviour, and his Religion, by suffering gladly the spoiling of their Goods, by rejoycing in the midst of scorching flames, not by fighting for it, or making it a pretence to Rebel.

Though they wanted not force nor numbers sufficient to have opposed their Heathen Emperours, and shaken their Thrones, yet they willingly submitted to the unjust Sentence of their Governours after the example of their Lord and Saviour; and the *Apologist* for them boasts, that none of them ever were found Guilty of Conspiracies against the Emperours, their holy Discipline teaching them rather to be killed, than to kill. Thus *Mauritius* who Commanded the famous *Thebæan Legion*, which being all Christians yielded themselves to Death under *Maximianus* told his fellow Souldiers, how much afraid he was lest they being Armed should under pretence of defending their fellows have resisted the Emperour, and hindered their Martyrdom: *When*, as he tells them, *this was forbidden by Christ, who would have that Sword, which the Apostle had drawn in his defence, to be put up.*

Here then, my Brethren, is the only case wherein Religion needs your valour, or calls for your courage: Not to be ashamed of it in a wicked Generation, not to

forsake

forsake it because of the Cross, with which it may sometimes be attended; to value pleasing God and your own Consciences above your Lives, or all this World calls dear. This is like true Souldiers of Jesus Christ, this is to be like the great Captain of our Salvation, and to follow him as our Leader, and by this we shall gain admittance into his Heavenly Kingdom. But to fight for the setting up of Christs Kingdom, to Rebell that we may avoid suffering for our Religion, or to take up Arms for the preservation of it was never heard of till the days of our New Reformers.

In truth, all this noise about resisting for the preservation of our Religion is a meer cheat and nonsense. No earthly power can reach it, or hinder Men from being as Religious as they will, or as God hath Commanded them. It is only to save themselves from suffering for their Religion, if the Supreme Magistrate should at any time Persecute the professors of it, that raises all their intemperate zeal and heat, and how agreeable that is with our Saviours Command of taking up his Cross, I leave to every Man to judge. If St. *Peter* might not draw his Sword to keep our Saviour from suffering, much less may we to keep our selves from it.

I shall only here add one observation, which I find made from this fact of St. *Peters*; that is, He who was so forward to draw his Sword in defence of his Master, was the first that shamefully denied him, and Swore and Curs'd that he never knew him. The reason of which is guessed to be, that he was afraid of being found

out

out to have been the Person that smote the High Priests Servant, and therefore would not own any Relation to our Saviour; but however this be, I find this very useful observation made upon it by an excellent Writer of our Church, that thus it very often happens, this is commonly the fate of such Men, who are so ready to draw their Swords upon all occasions for Christ, and his Religion and Gospel, against their Superiours, that they renounce their Saviour, and all his Religion, before ever they lay down their Swords again. Witness those Traitors that embrued their wicked hands in his late Majesties Blood. What zeal for Religion did they first pretend? what tenderness of Conscience, what honesty and integrity did they make shew of? and when they were enter'd and dipt in Rebellion, what Barbarity, what Villany did they stick at? what Law of our Religion did they not violate? what Commandment of our Saviour did they not scandalously break? Mind it when you will, they who are so ready to fight for their Religion, are most afraid to suffer for it.

I only beg your Patience, whilst I draw two Inferences from what I have now said.

1. It is generally enquired here, that if St. *Peter* upon so great an occasion as this might not draw his Sword against the Publick Officers, by what Authority then doth the *Bishop of Rome* as his Successor challenge to himself a Superiority over Soveraign Kings and Princes, and a power to Authorize their Subjects to take up Arms against them, and to depose them: I say, with what colour

colour of reason can they claim this Right by vertue of their Succession from St. *Peter*, when you see St. *Peter* himself had not leave to oppose or resist the meanest Servants or Souldiers that came Armed with Publick Authority? yet we are told that no less a Man than *Pope Boniface the Eighth* undertakes to prove from this very place, that St. *Peter* and the Church had the power of the temporal Sword. *He said unto him, put up thy Sword into the sheath* using these words *thy Sword*. Which I only mention to shew you to what pitiful shifts Men are put, how they are forced to wrack and torture the Gospels, when out of them they would get something that should countenance Sedition or Rebellion. So contrary is the Doctrine of Resistance to the plain Rules of our Religion, that those amongst us who have defended it in Print, have at last acknowledged it a *Mystery hid from former Ages, and reserved for these last days of greater Light*. They were fain to pretend a new Revelation for it.

1. From our Saviours words it undeniably appears, that all taking up Arms against our Soveraign Lord the King, or those Commissionated by him, let the pretence be what it will, is a plain damnable Sin. No subject be he of what rank or order soever, may draw the Sword, let the occasion be never so great, without sufficient Authority, which he can have only from the Supreme Power it self.

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I do not ſay we are bound actually to obey the Supreme Authority in all things. We have an higher Lord and Maſter in Heaven, to whom the greateſt Monarch is equally accountable for all his Actions, as his meaneſt Vaſſal. And I muſt not for the ſake of any inferiour Authority, renounce my Faith and Allegiance to that Heavenly King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The only difficulty then is, if I muſt neither obey my Superiours, when they Command things unlawful, nor yet by force defend my ſelf, when they go about to puniſh me for my diſobedience, what remedy have I left me? Muſt we all loſe our Rights, Liberties, Religion and Lives, whenever they chance to be invaded by our Governours, and ſit ſtill with our hands folded up within our Boſoms?

I anſwer, that againſt ſuch inconveniencies as theſe, which have ſometimes happened in the World, it is confeſſed that we have no other ſecurity, but the providence of God, which is over all his works, and the goodneſs of our Governours, who are under all poſſible moral obligations to rule with Juſtice, mercy and equity, and if they fail in their duties they ſhall find God a ſevere avenger. But however we are not to uſe any force towards them, any more than Children may againſt a froward and unkind Parent. Fly from them we may, and get out of their clutches, but we muſt not do the leaſt evil to them, nor ever draw our Swords againſt them. And *it is the pleaſure of God when ſuch a neceſſity lies upon us, that then we ſhould exerciſe our Chriſtian Patience, and commit our Souls unto our Creatour, being*

willing to lay down our Lives for his Honour from whom we received them. As the Learned *Grotius* Comments upon the words of my Text. This is the middle way the Gospel prescribes to us in such difficult circumstances, when we cannot without Sin obey, and may not resist, then quietly to submit our selves to suffer Gods will.

But thanks be to God, as to our selves in this Nation, these are only hard cases supposed by those, who wished well at least to the late horrid Conspiracy, on purpose to fright people out of their Allegiance and Obedience. For we are so far from having any such occasion or pretence for resisting, or using the Sword amongst us, that besides the plain unlawfulness and wickedness of so doing, we have all the obligations, and endearments and interest to engage us to live quietly and peaceably that Subjects can possibly desire.

Can we wish for, can we conceive a more Gracious Prince than him, whom God hath set over us, and hitherto preserved for the publick good and benefit of this Nation? How mild and gentle! how merciful and ready to forgive! So tender of his peoples welfare, so careful of their Liberties and Properties, that it appears they are far better and more safe in his hands than our own. Have we not excellent Laws to secure to us our Civil Rights, and is not our Religion as well established, as humane policy can do it?

Are

Are we not on many accounts the happiest and most fortunate people in the World, if we were but contented and pleased with our selves.

That a Nation of so great valour and natural courage, of so great skill in feats of Arms, and of such undaunted Spirits, which if united would be able to grapple with the strongest and most potent Kingdoms in the Earth, that hath all things in it self that can be called good, pleasant or desirable, should yet weaken and destroy our selves by quarrelling amongst our selves or against our own King, this is matter of wonder and astonishment to all the World beside.

The disloyalty of this Nation hath much broken our reputation, and we once thought we had almost recover'd our credit again by the Triumphant Restauration of his present Majesty, (whom God long preserve) till these late divisions, and commotions, and fresh conspiracies, and renewed attempts against the Government, have sunk us low in the esteem of all our neighbour Nations.

But Blessed be God, that this Poyson of Faction and Sedition hath not infected all sorts of Men. There was preserved a remnant that never bowed their knees to *Baal*, nor were carried away by the popular stream; who preserved their integrity and Loyalty intire in the midst of that crooked and perverse Generation. This Assembly here present is sufficient instance of the truth of what I say.

May

May the King never want such Subjects of such skill and courage, of such Loyalty and honesty to defend his Royal Person and happy Government against Foreign Invasions, and intestine Factions and Rebellions. And give me leave to end all with this Prayer, and I know you are such lovers of Peace, that you will all say Amen to it, However necessary the terrour of your Arms may be to the defence of the King and Church, yet God grant that neither of them may ever have occasion to make use of your Sword, or try either your skill or courage.

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